

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 29 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
29 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

Reports persist, particularly in the northern provinces, that the Communists are making preparations for a major offensive during May and June. A prisoner captured last week in southern I Corps claimed that another regiment was being formed there by the consolidation of local force battalions. Similar mergers were noted in this area prior to Tet.

2. Israel-Jordan

Abba Eban still believes there is a slim possibility that Jordan will agree to move unilaterally toward negotiations. [REDACTED]

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Eban's hopes, we think, are exaggerated. The political dangers for Husayn if he did agree to negotiate will probably persuade him to decline.

Eban undoubtedly realizes that time is running out for him and the other Israeli moderates who are anxious for some sort of diplomatic settlement with the Arabs. The Israeli "hawks" under Moshe Dayan are becoming more and more restive in the absence of any movement on the diplomatic front.

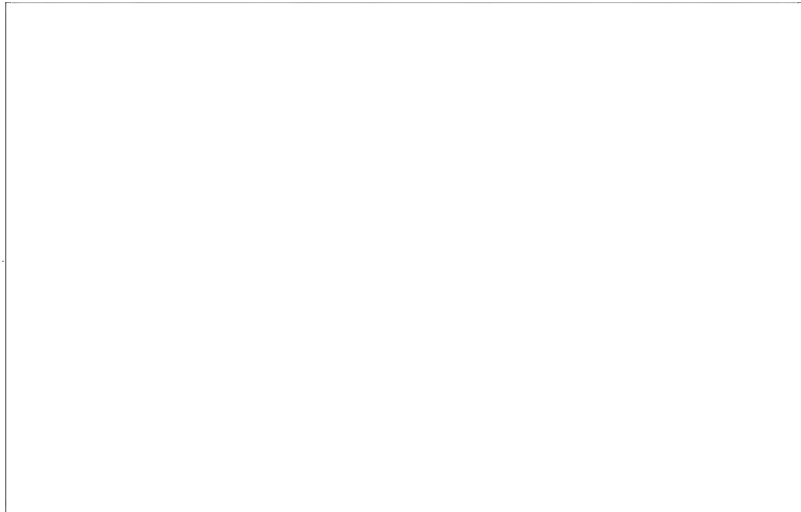
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3. Thailand

Insurgents recently overran a border security post in the north, killed 15 government defenders, and captured weapons and communications equipment. This is the most successful attack the Communist insurgents have mounted in Thailand to date.

4. France

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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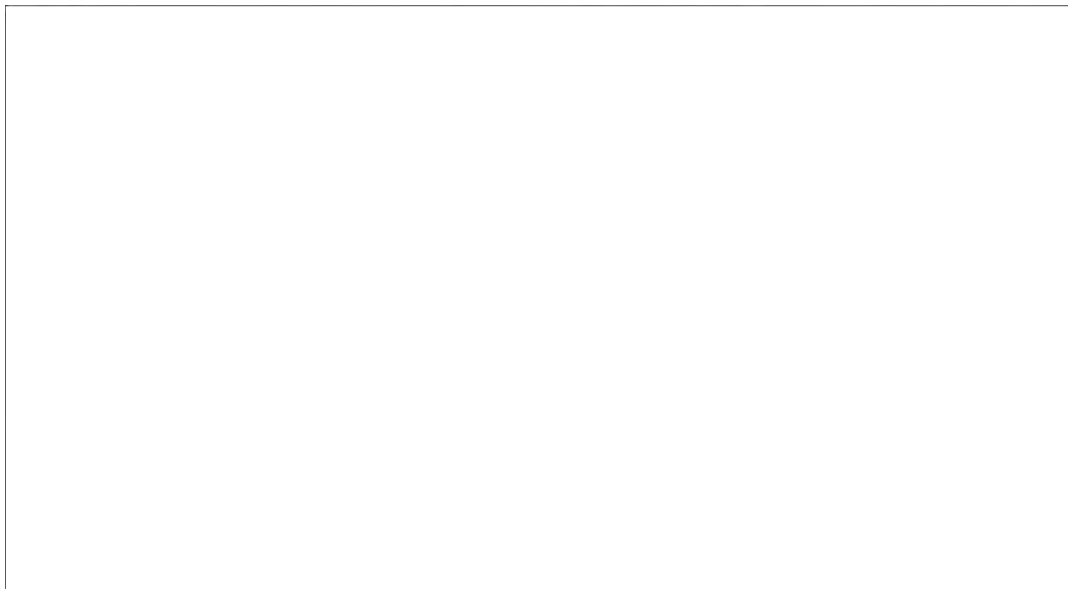
Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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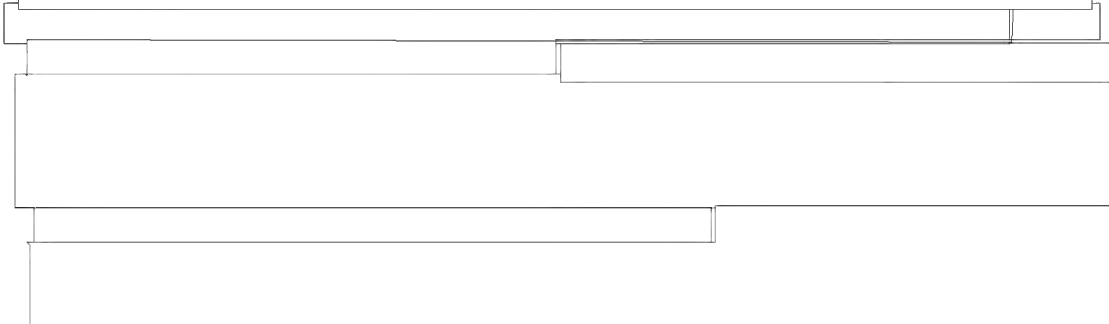
I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Hanoi on Site for Contacts: North Vietnam is continuing to press [redacted] for Warsaw as the venue for contacts with the US. It has consistently avoided committing itself irrevocably to the Polish capital, however.

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North Vietnamese officials abroad are pressing Hanoi's contention that Warsaw is the suitable place for the initial contact. Phung Man Cung, first secretary of Hanoi's embassy in Budapest, in a 26 April interview in Vienna claimed that Hanoi was still waiting for a US response to its Warsaw proposal. He pointed out that the US has had frequent talks with

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the Chinese Communists in Warsaw. But, he implied, Hanoi could out-wait the US on the site issue by saying, "We have time, much time."

Hanoi's propaganda also continues to push for Warsaw. Its broadcasts on 27 and 28 April took the line that well-known American public figures, including Senators Morse, McCarthy, and Young, have declared that the Polish capital is a suitable place and that the US has no valid reason to reject it. The broadcasts ridiculed President Johnson's statements about the US willingness to talk anywhere and about American desires to move immediately toward peace.

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Hanoi's Spokesmen in Paris Under Wraps: Unlike most of Hanoi's spokesmen abroad, the members of the North Vietnamese delegation in Paris are being particularly cautious these days in their relations with the press. This apparently is a reaction to recent revelations in the French papers, sourced to Hanoi's delegation, about contacts between Washington and Hanoi.

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Communists Continue to Inflate Claims of Military Success: The Vietnamese Communists have capped several weeks of almost totally unreal propaganda commentary on the war with one of their most exaggerated claims of military success in South Vietnam to date. In a communiqué of the Liberation Armed Forces

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which was broadcast by Hanoi on 26 April, they boasted that during the past 75 days more than 200,000 enemy have been killed, wounded, or captured and that 2,500 aircraft have been destroyed. All this, they allege, has seriously shaken the military, political, and economic foundations of the US and "its puppets." The communiqué cautioned, however, that despite the favorable military situation, many more difficulties and hardships lie ahead before victory will be achieved.

These claims may in part be an effort to shore up popular morale during a period when the prospect of negotiations with the US may be causing some doubts.

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Liberation Front Endorses "National Alliance":
The Communists are continuing to stress the importance of the newly formed "National Alliance." They claim that it, in concert with the Liberation Front, represents a broad united front which will defeat the US and the "Vietnamese puppets." In statements on 26 and 27 April, the Front endorsed the new alliance and pledged to cooperate with it. It also promised to support the alliance's political program--a program almost identical with its own.

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Consolidation of European Medical Assistance for Hanoi: Medical associations in several West European countries have formed a secretariat, headquartered in Paris, to coordinate and consolidate their assistance to North Vietnam.

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Ho Votes: In his first appearance since the first of the year, 77-year-old Ho Chi Minh cast his vote in a local election at a polling place in Hanoi on 28 April, according to a Hanoi broadcast. The announcement stated that Ho "nimblely stepped into the room and cast his ballot."

Ho's appearances have become a rare occurrence in recent years. In 1967 he was out of view from March to late August except for an appearance at a similar election in late April. He also made a number of appearances in late December and early January, probably to counter intense rumors at that time that he was seriously ill. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] his age alone would dictate his slowing down and making fewer appearances.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Liberation Front Group Appeals for US Support:

The student union of the Liberation Front has sent a message to American youth and students appealing to them to "step up their antiwar activities and to demand that the US stop sending more soldiers to Vietnam." The message, broadcast by Hanoi's international service on 27 April, hailed the participation of American youth in the current ten days of protest against US policy in Vietnam. It paid high tribute to the "valiant, just struggle of the American people for their legitimate rights."

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